

# Bridge Commission Reports to Council That Congress Street Bridge Cost Total of \$295,247

## Full Text of Report of Labor of Special Commission That Had Charge of Construction of Congress Street Bridge

The Congress Street Bridge Commission submitted its final report to the common council last night. The total cost of the bridge was \$295,247, including \$50 for materials not yet constructed. The commission has a balance remaining of \$10,403.84.

The report follows: The Congress Street Bridge Commission was organized by an action of the common council taken at a meeting December 17, 1906, instructing the mayor to appoint a committee of five citizens to investigate the feasibility of constructing a bridge across the Pequonnock river at Congress street; to prepare plans and specifications, together with the engineer's report, of a bridge with the same name as the one now there; and said committee was authorized and empowered to appear before the board of appropriation and taxation in reference to an appropriation for the same; or if deemed advisable, to make application to the general assembly for authority to issue bonds in the name of the City of Bridgeport to defray the costs, and report back to the common council their findings in the matter.

In pursuance of such action His Honor, Mayor Marcus L. Reynolds appointed Messrs. E. Manwaring, Horace E. French, Samuel W. Hubbell, Charles M. Cole and Bradford D. Pierce, Jr., as a committee. This committee met on January 1, 1907, and was organized with Mr. W. Manwaring as President and Horace E. French as Secretary. On January 7, 1907, this committee made its first report to the common council recommending that a new bridge be constructed over the river then existing bridge; and that the committee be empowered to spend such sum or sums of money as might be deemed necessary or proper, the same to be appropriated by the board of appropriation and taxation, that the committee be authorized to make application to the general assembly for an issue of bonds to be upon the credit of the city of Bridgeport for the carrying out of the project, and that all funds so appropriated to said committee be paid out by the treasurer of the city upon order of the bridge commission. This report and recommendation was adopted by the common council on January 7, 1907. By act of general assembly approved May 22, 1907, the issue of bonds by the city of Bridgeport was authorized and the committee was authorized and empowered to proceed with the construction of the bridge.

**Short of Funds.** For a period of about six months subsequent to the organization of the committee there were no funds at their disposal, but this time was employed in gaining all available information relating to the different types of lift bridge and other features. At this period there was appropriated to the use of the commission the sum of \$2,500.00 for preliminary work.

On July 9, 1907, Engineer R. M. Berrian met the commission and submitted a verbal proposition to act as consulting engineer. His proposition was later confirmed in writing and accepted by the commission. This proposition was upon the basis of a commission of 4 per cent. upon the amount of the contracts. On August 7 following, Major Harry Taylor (representing the United States Government) met the commission and submitted the probable requirements of the Government which were that the proposed bridge should have a modern type of lift bridge susceptible of being opened in not to exceed one minute from the time of signal; should have a clear opening between fenders of not less than seventy feet; the piers should be in line with the current, thus bringing the channel in direct line with the opening of the railroad bridge; and that the final plans when completed should be submitted to the war department for approval before final acceptance by the commission.

On the date of August 12, 1907, Mr. Berrian was instructed to prepare plans, and submit approximate estimates upon the same, for a bridge 75 feet in width, first for an all steel superstructure, and second for one of same dimension with reinforced concrete fixed spans. He was also requested to prepare a preliminary estimate of cost for a purely highway bridge as compared with one for highway and trolley commission.

**Revised Plans.** On September 7, following, Mr. Berrian submitted a plan for a 75 foot wide bridge with steel bascule draw, and reinforced concrete fixed spans, with the following estimated cost as \$270,000.00; also an all steel superstructure of same dimensions at \$255,000.00, estimate being exclusive of engineering and other minor expenses.

He also reported that a bridge of similar construction 60 foot wide for highway purposes only would cost \$50,000.00 less. The commission then appointed a sub-committee consisting of the president and secretary to negotiate with the Connecticut company in regard to the company's abandoning their right of way over this bridge, and the general estimate in cost as estimated by the Engineer, viz., \$100,000.00. The negotiations extended over a period of several weeks but with no satisfactory result.

On December 2, the committee submitted a report and recommendation to the common council asking their cooperation in urging the general assembly to enact adequate laws making it obligatory for electric roads to bear their share of costs in such matters. On December 17, the death of Engineer R. M. Berrian was announced to the committee, which fact the committee greatly deplored. On January 20, following, Mr. F. Stoddard met the commission and submitted a proposition, but awaiting results of negotiations with the Railroad company, the committee did not complete the contract with Mr. Stoddard until the following July.

Late in June of 1908 a proposition came to the commission from the railroad company, whereby the company agreed to pay \$25,000 toward the construction of the bridge. As action was then pending in the common council regarding the appeal to the general assembly, the commission deemed it wise to refer the offer to the city government. The opinion of

the commission was requested. Feeling that the amount was inadequate the commission met a representative of the road and it was finally agreed that the acceptance of \$30,000 as a compromise measure should be advised. This was down in the report to your body on date of July 6, when the recommendation of the Commission was adopted.

**Plans Made.** In August following, propositions were received from the Strauss company, and also from the Scherer company for the movable span. The latter company only, however, offered a bridge planned to conform to the skew arches demanded by the government regulations for the fixed spans, and the plan to sustain them and the draw; all others required such long spans for the channel that they did not appeal to the Commission.

With all the owners of lift-bridge patents there was required the payment of a royalty, as well as the payment of the preparation of plans and specifications and the supervision of this portion of the work. This was a separate proposition from the fixed spans, and of the plan and specifications for which were prepared and furnished by our Engineer, Mr. Raymond F. Stoddard. The Strauss company was entered into with Scherer company, and late in September of that year their preliminary plans were presented. These plans did not meet the approval of our commission on account of the fact that the counterweights extended to low water level, and the bridge was open, making it probable that pumping would have to be resorted to to keep the piers clear of the water. Our commission representative in Chicago, the home of the Scherer company, to endeavor to arrange some improvement in this respect. This was done, and resulted in developing new plans which raised that portion of the bridge two feet higher than the first plans contemplated, and also shortened the counterweights so as to bring the piers one foot below mean high water, thus allowing them to be drained by the action of the tide. The change added about \$15,000 to the estimated cost of the draw-span, but other changes upon this outlay and kept the cost at about the original estimate. The first plans contemplated constructing the draw-span about three feet higher than the old bridge. This added increase in the height established a grade of two feet on the west approach, and slightly less than three feet on the east approach, a limit that the commission felt ought not to be exceeded.

These changes of course affected the improved properties on the north side of each approach. Satisfactory arrangements were made with these owners which obviated any damage claims by reason of the change of grade.

**Contract Let.** With the various preliminaries decided, plans and specifications were finally adopted and bids invited through advertisement in several engineering publications with a result of eight bids. There were no distinctly local bidders. The estimates were based upon unit prices for the material in place for building the foundations and approaches; the superstructure called for a lump sum bid for the unit prices approximate estimates by our Engineer R. F. Stoddard, were furnished of the material required, in arriving at the total of each bid a large amount of reckoning was required and the first results showed approximately \$30,000 difference in the estimates received, with \$7,563 between the two lowest.

In the summing up of the several estimates submitted there was apparent a difference of opinion existing among the contestants regarding the definition of a few items of the specifications. In order to make the proposition entirely fair the commission invited a further conference with the four lowest competitors with the view of making these items more plain and specific, thus securing a possible revision of the estimates upon these items.

The final result proved a difference of \$1,138 between the two lowest. The second lowest bid was from the Schar and Trist company of New York City, and the contract was awarded that company upon January 8, 1907.

The appraisal estimate upon this contract was \$254,124.00. The final estimate when the bridge was accepted was \$256,444.90, saving from the appraisal estimate of \$1,319.10. At the time since the commission awarded the contract there has appeared in local papers a veiled criticism of the action taken, the claim being that local bidders were not recognized and that the local bid was the lowest offered. The commission has never publicly answered for the reason that they were governed in this matter by strictly business-like methods, acting as they would in their private affairs under similar circumstances; not deeming it polite to publish the reasons, reasons that appealed to the best judgment of every member, and against which the slight difference in cost was of little weight. Nothing has since occurred to cause a change of opinion on the part of the commission. Several other considerations beside the responsibility of the parties governed the decision.

The commission thought it a wise precaution to preserve as close as possible a record of the conditions prevailing before and during the progress of the work, in anticipation of any possible claim arising from changes made necessary by the building of the new bridge. Photographic views were taken from four different locations before the commencement of operations, and successive views have been taken each month during its progress; these will be turned over to the city for a record.

**Temporary Bridge Caused Delay.** The original estimate of costs provided for a temporary bridge which was to have been located on the north side of the old bridge at an estimated cost of \$1,800. Subsequent events proved this plan impracticable and delayed the construction.

Later through the courtesy of the railroad company permission was obtained to land the west end upon their property south of the bridge. This increased the length and added materially to the cost of this item. The construction, repairs and removal of the temporary bridge in cost aggregated \$3,000, an increase over the estimate of \$1,200.

There was a section of the old bridge approach opposite the United Illuminating company works which during the existence of the former bridge had given some trouble on account of a deep layer of soft material underlying it. This was taken care of in the general plans by a grillage of piles, and the plan to sustain them and the draw; all others required such long spans for the channel that they did not appeal to the Commission.

While these three changes will add \$5,108.00 to the aggregate cost, the commission was assured of being able to complete the project within the appropriation set apart for it.

**Blocks From Worcester.** The paving of the roadway upon the approaches and fixed spans has been a question of grave consideration to the commission. Keeping in mind the grade and the probable large increase of traffic, the commission felt that no pains should be spared to make this one of the best paved thoroughfares in the city. A committee consisting of Mr. W. Manwaring, and H. E. French was sent to Worcester, Mass., and gained valuable information through that city's engineering department of a method which they have been constructing for many years with very satisfactory results both in wear and cost of maintenance. This is a granite block laid upon a cushion base with an intervening sand cushion, then solidly grouted in all its joints and afterward flushed on the surface. To judge from the work done in Worcester, this comes nearer a permanent pavement than any other system the commission have studied.

The blocks are of a peculiar texture of granite and were furnished under a contract by the Webb Granite Construction company of Worcester, Mass. The balance of the material was furnished by the labor of laying was under contract awarded to Contractor A. J. Langfield of Hartford. The successful bidder who was also awarded a contract by the Connecticut company for their portion.

The entire time of construction, including the cessation of work during extreme cold weather will be about one and one-half years. The commission believe that for the magnitude of the undertaking, this is not unreasonable.

Since probably very few casual observers of this construction realize the magnitude of the work, a summary has been prepared of the principal materials used in building the bridge, which is as follows: viz., 554 cubic yards of dressing, 5,151 piles or 104,277 lineal feet; 69,194 feet (board measure) of sheet piling; timber in grillage (yellow pine) 177,000 feet board; 13 cubic yards of concrete; rip-rap, 6,678 yards of excavation; 1,879 yards of granite masonry; 20,000 cubic yards of concrete masonry; steel reinforcing rods, 2,188 pounds; structural steel, 50,893 pounds; machinery 7,355 pounds; counterweights in lifts, 1,339,200 pounds; water wheels, 25,000 square feet; 9,000 cubic yards of filling; creosoted yellow pine timber, 35,000 feet (board measure); creosoted pavement, 1,500 square feet; structural rail, 250 lineal feet; granolithic sidewalks, 1,274 yards; granolithic curb, 1,730 lineal feet; oak ties in fenders, 8,850 lineal feet; spruce timber in fenders, 1,562 feet (board measure); yellow pine timber in fenders, 12,040 feet (board measure); electrical equipment, approximately \$4,500; two operating houses. There was approximately 102,000 feet of board measure of yellow pine used in the caisson work.

There was about 200 piles, and 130,000 feet of lumber used in false works for caissons, beside an unknown amount for forms, etc., in the lump sum portion.

Granite paving (including Connecticut company's portion) about 4,400 square yards.

**Contract Provisions.** The contract of the Schar and Trist company included paying only upon the draw span, and their portion of the work was practically completed in June, and on the date of July 11, 1910, Engineer Stoddard reported the completion of their contract and filed the final estimate of cost, viz., \$256,444.90. At the same meeting the bridge was formally accepted and the bond of the Schar and Trist company released. The president of the United Illuminating company, Mr. W. Manwaring, reported that the construction of track upon the west approach would not be completed until such time as the manner of widening should be definitely settled. This compelled a cessation of the work of paving; the shipment of paving blocks was countermanded and the contractor upon the paving was obliged to suspend operations.

The commission after considering all the possibilities of the situation voted to send a committee to wait upon the mayor to arrange for a temporary road over the unfinished portion, so that the bridge might become accessible to team traffic as it had

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| <b>RAISINS</b><br>Seeded Raisins, pkg., 10c<br>Seedless Raisins, pkg., 10c<br>Basket Raisins, pkg., 12 1-2c<br>Cleaned Currants, 10c. | <b>PEELS</b><br>Citron, a lb., 20c.<br>Orange Peel, a lb., 15c.<br>Lemon Peel, lb., 20c.<br>Crystallized Ginger, 10 and 25c. | <b>SEASONING</b><br>BELL'S, a box, 10c.<br>Thyme a lb., 25c, pkg. 2c<br>Sage, 25c, pkg. 2c<br>Majorm, 25c, pkg. 2c<br>Savory, 25c, pkg. 2c. | <b>MINCEMEAT</b><br>None Such pkg., 10c<br>A&P, 25c<br>Atmore's, a lb., 12c<br>Empire Pickles 10, 18 & 30c | <b>SOUPS</b><br>Campbell's 3 for 25c<br>Franco American 16 & 20c<br>Plum Pudding R & H. No. 1 cans 23c<br>R. & H. No. 2 cans 45c |
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been to foot passengers from the time of its acceptance. This proposition met with the approval of Mayor Buckingham and was accomplished under the direction of Director M. A. Kuny; the bridge being informally opened on July 16, at 9 a. m., 1910.

The decision of the Connecticut commission regarding the completion of their roadbed has not been rescinded, but nevertheless the work has been resumed, presumably under some understanding with the city government.

As the bridge proper is practically completed, and as no further responsibility regarding their charge, we very gladly turn it over to the city as near completed as was possible under the circumstances.

**Unfinished Matters.** Owing to causes beyond the control of the commission there are two matters which they have been unable to finish.

First—The contract for paving the approaches between the city and A. J. Langfield and the Webb Granite Construction company still has not been completed, but the commission has arranged with the paving commission of this city to complete these contracts within the time allowed. The commission estimate that \$550.00 with the material on hand will complete this work.

Second—The commission also arranged with the United Illuminating company for the sum of \$254.00 to install cable and connections across the channel for the bridge, the cable was laid, but not to the acceptance of the government inspector, therefore the account still stands on the line. The Illuminating company now agrees that when the dredging through the draw occurs, they will take up the cable and after completion, as also the cable, locate the cable in its proper position.

The material on hand together with the appropriation of \$50.00 to the adjoining property and the sum of \$550.00, will, we estimate, complete the paving; so that the expenditures as represented by 28 voters on file in the office of the city auditor represent the cost of the structure which we find to be \$254,647.16.

The contribution by the Connecticut company was \$30,000. The commission also received from the United Illuminating company the sum of \$550 for their portion of the paving upon the movable span; the remainder of their right-of-way having been paid under a separate contract between that company and the contractor who performed the work. The balance of the lines building the sum of \$100.

Appropriated by the city, \$275,000 00  
Contribution by the Connecticut company, 30,000 00  
Received from the Connecticut Co., for their portion of the paving upon movable span, 550 00  
Sale of Lines building, 100 00  
Amount of funds at disposal of the commission, \$305,650 00  
Expended costs, \$234,697 16  
Leaving a balance to credit of bridge account, \$10,403 84

In concluding, the commission beg to report upon one matter which we are unable to account for or explain, viz.: Since the bridge has been in use, we discover that the fenders, which were intended to protect the bridge from the approach of boats, have been forced back to their original position, and obtain the clear way which it was the intention of the commission and their engineer to secure.

Finally, we desire to express our sincere thanks to the different administrations of the city government, especially to the city auditor, Bernard Keating, and the city attorney, Thomas M. Cullinan, the commission would render full appreciation and thanks for constant and ready assistance and advice.

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### ORDINANCE PROPOSED TO CREATE OFFICE OF PLUMBING INSPECTOR

Alderman James J. Conlin offered a proposed ordinance creating the office of plumbing inspector, the ordinance to be elected by the board of aldermen and to hold office for two years. The ordinance requires that the inspector shall work in cooperation with the Board of Building Commissioners and the Board of Health in the enforcement of the plumbing laws of the state and the city ordinances. The ordinance was referred to the ordinance committee.

James J. Kerwin and many others who are property holders in Edna avenue, Livingstone Place and Beardsley Park terrace, petitioned for the establishment of grades on those streets.

Both Alderman Garrity and Alderman Mahoney of the Second district spoke against a petition by the Bridgeport Malleable Iron Co. for the discontinuance of Walnut street between South and Ridge avenues. Alderman Garrity said the street had been a public highway since 1848. The petition was referred to the committee on streets and sidewalks.

### COTTON REPORT

(Special from United Press.)

Washington, Dec. 20—A cotton ginning report, issued by the census bureau today, shows 10,688,482 bales counted round as half bales, gained from the growth of 1910 to December 12, as compared with 9,358,085 for 1909.

Round bales, included this year, are 106,827, as compared with 140,024 for 1909.

Sea Island shows 75,120 bales for 1910 as compared with 57,177, in 1909.

### MERIDEN TO ISSUE \$500,000 BONDS

PLANS BIG IMPROVEMENT IN MUNICIPAL WATER SERVICE—SOME CHARTER AMENDMENTS.

The city of Meriden has filed with the State Secretary a petition for the January session of the General Assembly, requesting that amendments be made to the charter of that city with respect to the following matters:

Assessment for the use of oil in street sprinkling; insurance against fire by the city, of the property which is located therein, of inhabitants thereof; authorizing a municipal fire department; the purpose of providing surplus funds of the waterworks; assessment upon the city of the expenses incurred in the matter of street widening; the matter of street widening; the matter of street widening; the matter of street widening.

Worse than an alarm of fire at night, is the metallic cough of croup, bringing dread to the household. Careful mothers keep Foley's Honey and Tar in the house and give it at the first sign of danger. It contains no opiates. F. B. Brill and Curtis Pharmacy.

### DIED.

BEECHER.—In Torrington, Dec. 17, Davis Beecher, aged 74 years.

HICKS.—In Winsted, Dec. 15, Carolina, widow of Peter Hicks, aged 53 years.

O'BRIEN.—In Winsted, Dec. 14, John O'Brien, aged 20 years.

ABBOTT.—In New Canaan, Dec. 12, Margaret E. Abbott, aged 87 years.

BARTOW.—In New Canaan, Dec. 12, Dinah, wife of C. L. Bartow, aged 71 years.

LOWELL.—In Torrington, Dec. 14, Mrs. John Lowell, aged 48 years.

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